



Campbell Chapel

Sermon by Bob Bradley



Being Justified by Faith, We Have Peace with God

Sunday, April 29, 2018

Bob Bradley

The book of Romans, chapter 5. The Lord being our helper for a few moments. There are a couple of things here we want to talk about this evening.

Romans is a wonderful book, when you take time to read it; Romans is probably one of the deeper books in the Bible. There is a lot of great things in here you can read and find out.

No doubt, the greatest thing is that we are justified by faith, and we are not justified by works. When you read about some of the great theologians of all time, you will read about their testimonies. They will tell you in their testimonies that by hearing messages preached from the book of Romans about justification by faith that it saved them and changed their lives. It changed how they looked at things and because of some of these great men that have been saved then some great revivals have broken out, not only in America but also other places around the world. Faithful preaching from the book of Romans has brought many unto the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a great book. It is a great time.

Paul, if I understand things correctly, as I read; probably AD 56, he was at Corinth. He wrote this letter to the believers at Rome and probably when I read chapter 16, it would indicate to me probably that Phoebe is the one that carried the letter to Rome, a faithful sister. She is the one who carried the letter to Rome and was able to share that with these folks at Rome.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5:3 And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

Romans 5:4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

Romans 5:5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

In Paul's day and even in our day, we have so many folks that wants to preach, teach and believe that they are going to stand before God justified, or they are going to stand before and be pleasing to God because of the works that they have done. Paul wants these people here at Rome to understand that we are not justified by works. We are justified by faith in Almighty God. That is something that is so important. Not only that but here is the thought that I have tonight. ...what justification...since we are justified it will produce some things in our life; being justified. When you look up the word

justification and sanctification, I know these words sometimes get a little bit intimidating to us. But they are great words. If you are a Christian they shouldn't intimidate you, because they are words or things that we should know. If you are saved tonight, you have been justified. You have been justified. Justification is a work, an act, a declaration of Almighty God where He declares us, believing sinners; He declares us righteous because of what work Christ did. Get this. He does that. God the Father does that because we simply believe the message of the gospel, the work that Jesus Christ has done and since we believe that Jesus Christ died and arose again then we are justified, we are declared righteous. Righteousness is imputed or put on our account simply because that we have faith in Almighty God. There is no other reason that we have been declared righteous.

Get this. It does not say that we are righteous. Okay? The Bible will tell us that we are sinners. We are sinners in the sight of a Holy God. However, when Jesus Christ died for you and me, and when we believed that, then God declares us righteous because we have put faith in the work of His Son, Jesus Christ. Isn't that great?

All you have to do is look at your life and know you are not perfect. We have issues. We have problems. Aren't you glad when God the Father looks at us and when we have faith and have put faith in Jesus Christ then He puts righteousness on our account. Isn't that great? I can't make myself righteous. I can't make myself pleasing to God, nor can you. However, because of faith—nothing else—we have been declared righteous in the eyes of Almighty God.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Get that. No other reason, not by works; nothing else. We have been declared right with God because of faith we have put in Jesus Christ. He says here we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Listen. If you remember, before you made things right, before you were declared righteous; do you know what was going on in life? Everyone of us had a war going on in here. We had all kinds of turmoil on the inside. We had the judgement of God pronounced upon us. We were doomed. We were damned. We had no hope. We had no peace. We were on our way to a lake of fire. However, aren't you glad today, since we have been declared righteous, God has declared right with Him because we have put faith in Jesus Christ? Aren't you glad tonight that we have peace tonight. We don't have to worry about going to the lake of fire. We are not at war with God anymore. We have been reconciled. We have been brought back into a right relationship with the God of heaven. Do you know what that should do? That should excite you tonight. We were lost. We had no hope. We had no peace. Thank God, if you are reconciled tonight, if you are saved tonight, then you have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Amen! Not by works. Not by your giving. Amen! Not by how much Bible you read. Not by how many times you testify. We have peace with God tonight through our Lord

Jesus Christ. We have been brought into a right relationship. We are no longer separated from Almighty God.

Do you remember how we felt and how you felt before you got saved?

I can. I can remember when God spoke to me. I knew I was lost and undone. Do you know what I knew? I knew there was a separation between me and God. I knew there was something missing. I had no peace. I had no hope.

Listen. Because of Jesus Christ and putting faith in Him, I have peace tonight. I have peace and you have peace. Since you have been justified, you have been declared righteous in the eyes of Almighty God; you have peace tonight. Amen! That is good.

Also, we are no longer separated with God. We are accepted with God. God accepts us. amen! We were aliens, the Bible tells us. We were alienated from the...we had no hope. We did not have the promises of God. We had no peace. We didn't have that. However, now, we are the sons of God. The Bible says, it does not yet appear what we shall be but we know when He shall appear, we shall be like Him because we shall see Him as He is.

Do you know what I say tonight? I say glory to His name. I have peace tonight. I know who I am. I know where I am going. I know who He is. Do you know what I know tonight? There is no condemnation. The Bible says there is therefore now there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...

Romans 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

Putting faith in Jesus Christ, gives us life and it gives us peace. Hallelujah! That is good. Isn't it? I'm glad I'm justified. Aren't you? I'm glad that when I look at self, I know there is nothing good here. I know I am not perfect. Get this. I know within myself; I know I am not righteous. Amen! Do you know what I do know? I do know that I put my faith in Jesus Christ and I do know that since I put faith in Jesus Christ, God the Father has put righteousness on my account. He deposited that in us. God's righteousness. Not yours. Not mine. Not some preacher's but the righteousness that comes from Almighty God.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

The Lord Jesus Christ is the source of all of our peace. I know in life sometimes we try all kinds of different things. We look and we search. Even sometimes, after we start coming to church, we might look for this and try to figure this out; but I want you to

understand that the only source of peace that there is—is Jesus Christ. He is the source of our peace. Peace exists and comes forth from the Savoir, the One that hung on a tree and died. Peace comes through Him. We were aliens. We had no hope. We were at war with God. However, since we have been reconciled, since we have been declared righteous; we have peace with God tonight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. If you don't know Jesus tonight, then you don't know peace. Amen! If you don't know Jesus as your Savoir tonight then you have no peace.

Do you know why people today jump off of bridges? Do you know why people put guns to their heads today and pulls the trigger? Do you know why people do all kinds of things today to hurt themselves, harm themselves and sometimes destroy themselves? They have no peace. They think there is no hope. They have their lives in such a mess because of sin, because of the path they have traveled; they have no peace. Their life is in a turmoil. When they go to bed at night they can't sleep because they have no peace. When the daylight they are just as much in turmoil as they were when they sat down because they have no peace. They think there is no hope.

I want people to know. I want your family to know. I want my family to know. I want everybody to know that there is way, there is a person that can give you peace. He can calm the raging that is in your life. He can put you on a path. He can forgive. He can clean you up. He can make all the wrongs right. Thank God. He is a Savior that will give us peace when we will just come to Him.

Do you know how I know that? I was there one time. If you were unsaved, maybe you weren't at the degree of decay that somebody else was because there are differences of decay. Everybody is dead. However, there are different degrees of decay. A good moral that is lost, but there might not be much decay in their life. Think about that for a moment and you will get that after a while.

Here is the thing. Jesus Christ can give you peace. I don't want you to think there is no hope. Whoever it is that I am talking to tonight; wherever it is at I don't want you to give up hope. There is hope tonight. There is hope for you. There is hope for this world. There is hope for the drug addicts. There is hope for the murderers. There is hope for everybody. It doesn't matter who you are or how bad you have been or what you have done in life, there is hope for you and that hope is in Jesus Christ. We are going to talk about that in a moment.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Through Jesus Christ; not through church membership, not through baptism, not through giving; but the peace that we have comes through Jesus Christ. He is the source. That is the first result that we have in our lives that we get in our lives. The first favor that we have in our lives, God forgives us and instantly, we have peace. Do you remember that? Do you remember when you got saved? Do you remember how different you felt instantly? I know there is sanctification and we will talk about that word

some other time. That is a good word. I know there is progressive sanctification, the more we live for Him, and dedicate our lives to Him, the more that we cut off the world. I understand that. The instant that you got saved, you had peace. Not a week, not a month, not a year, but the very instant you got saved, you had peace. That is the first result of you being justified or declared righteous in the eyes of Almighty God. You put faith in Jesus. God the Father that sits on the throne saw that you have put faith in Jesus. He knew you were genuine. The first thing He imputes is peace. Isn't that awesome? It really is. It is awesome! I know sometimes we may not understand everything and how it works. I don't either. I do know one thing. I know that the little church I went to that night, a long way from here, up in the head of a hollow; I do know that when I went down, I was at war with God. I know that when I got up that I was a peace with God. I knew that. Donnie has been to that church many times as a kid, as a child.

Poppy Wolfe had a nose this long. He could lean that head back and sing, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*. Amen! That was good times. Wasn't it? Those old folks are gone now. Then we were just kids. We are the old folks now.

Justification by faith. Declared righteous by faith. The first instant, as soon as we believed, God imputes righteousness. Because of that righteousness, we have peace.

The second thing is this.

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

“By whom also we have access...” By and through Jesus Christ, we have access by faith.

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Access. Do you know what we have today? We have access to the throne room of God in heaven tonight. Me and you. People who were raised on White Oak and Leatherwood and Pedro and Argillite and Ironton—people like us. Since we have been declared righteous in the eyes of God, because we have put faith in Jesus Christ; He imputes us with righteousness. He places righteousness on our account. Instantly we have peace, but not only do we have peace, but also, we have access to heaven. Isn't that awesome? That is awesome that we have access to the God of heaven.

Get this. It is through the same source that we have our peace. Our access to heaven comes through Jesus Christ. Amen! He is our high priest. He is the one we pray to. He is the One that takes our petitions to the throne of God. That is Jesus. That is how we got access. Amen! You don't get access to heaven because of who you are, or because of your family lineage. You get access to heaven because you are a child of God. You have been born again. You have been forgiven. Your name is written in heaven. That is why you have access to God tonight. Amen!

Access is a good word, when you look at it. Access unto what? You and I have access unto the grace of Almighty God. It means to be present. It means we can be brought right into the presence of the grace of Almighty God.

We talk about grace and that is something we need. Grace is something that we need. We need grace. We need His grace. We have access, not only to His grace but also to heaven. I have said this many times before. When the children of Israel had left Egypt and they decided they were not going to go to the land of Canaan because of what they saw over there. We know that ten spies said they could not go and two said they could go. We know that generation wandered around in the wilderness over there for 40 years until everybody that was above 20 years old all died. They all died except Joshua and Caleb. Do you know what these people could have done? They have gone right into the place that God prepared for them. They could have gone right into the promised land. They could have gone over and inhabited houses that they had never built. They could have gone over and drank water from wells they had never dug. They could have gone over there and ate from some of the fruit that they had carried back on a pole between them. I thought about that many times. There must have been grapes over there that were as big as basketballs. Do you know what these people could have done? They could have gone over and inherited—they had access right to everything that God wanted to give them. Do you know what they said? No. We don't want to go. Do you know what God said? That's fine. I'll take somebody else over.

Do you know what God wants us to do today? God wants to bless us. God has a whole storehouse full of blessings that He wants to pour out upon us today. Do you know what? We have access to that by Jesus Christ. We can get there. We can have that. Do you know what we do? We don't want it sometimes. Do you know why? Sometimes it takes a little effort. Do you know what? The closer we get to the return of Jesus Christ, I think the less effort that people who are born again, want to put out. It seems like that.

I don't want us to be like that. I want us to be energized. I want us to be lit up. I want us to be on fire because there are people in this community that are counting on you and me. There are people in this community, there are people who walk the streets every day that are counting on you and me. There are people in the jail that are counting on you and me. There are people who walk the streets, there are people in grocery stores tonight, there are people on jobs tonight who are counting on you and me. They are counting on you and me to teach them, point them, and to bring them unto Christ. I can't save them. However, do you know what we can do? We can bring them to where they can get saved. We can teach them truth. We can teach them about the Lord. We have access tonight. The same God that saved us and declared us righteous; we have peace through Jesus Christ, the moment we get saved, the moment He declares us righteous, we have peace.

The next thing we have—we have access. Since we have peace—get this—since we have peace then our thinking and our direction in life changes. When you get saved, if

you got saved, when you got saved then how you thought changed. Your priorities in life changed. What you wanted to do in life, changed. What you wanted to accomplish in life, changed. You have been declared righteous. God has placed that within and on our account. We have peace with Him now. We know that we are not at war with Him anymore. He has changed the way that we think. We have access to Him tonight. Do you know what we do? We can access all of heaven tonight. God has so much. God wants to show favor to us. amen! God wants to show His hand of blessing on us.

I know sometimes we think we do a lot, but we really don't. I think sometimes we think that we don't have time. Sometimes we don't have time because of all the other stuff we get involved in. I want to tell you something tonight. We have access to heaven tonight. Whether you are accessing that or not is up to you. I can't make you access that. If you have a phone, there is a password. If you have the password, you can access information on a phone or on a device.

Get this. Write this down. This is really going to be deep theology. Okay? Jesus Christ is our access to heaven. Okay? He is the one that we need to plug in. Do you know what He will do? He will give us access right to the throne room of Almighty God. That is exciting to me.

Not only do we have peace, we have access; but he says here this.

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Do you know what we do tonight? We can take a stand. We have access. We have been brought in. We have been introduced. We know who Jesus Christ is. We stand—listen—if you are saved tonight, we have access to heaven and we can stand. We take a stand right in His presence. We can approach the throne room of Almighty God. We talked this morning and last week where John saw God the Father sitting on the throne. Amen! We can approach that. Right in His presence. We are saved. We have all the privileges of God. Every blessing that God has—all of them—He wants to bless us with. We have access to them. Every blessing that God has promised the New Testament church, you have access to every one of them. Now there are some things He promised Israel that you don't have access to. However, the things that God has promised unto us, the New Testament church; you have access to that. Every privilege, every blessing, everything that heaven has to offer; you have access to it. However, it is up to us whether we want to access it or not. It is up to us.

I will tell you this, guys. I mean this sincerely. I don't think we even scratch the surface of what God has and how that God wants to bless us and how that God wants to show favor on our lives. He has blessed us greatly. I know that. However, I don't think we have even scratched the surface on what He really wants to do through His people. There is so much more. When I read the book, there is so much more.

Not only do we have access, but the next thing we can read about here is this.

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Isn't that great to know? We rejoice in the hope—hope. It is not a hope like this world hopes. The world has a hope that maybe this is going to happen or this is going to happen. Do you know what hope for a Christian means? I know this is going to happen. I know that I am saved. I know that I have been born again. I know that I have been declared righteous. I know that I have peace with God. I know I have access to the throne of heaven. I have hope. I know that Jesus Christ is going to do exactly what He said He was going to do. I know that. That is what hope is for a Christian. I know that He is going to come and get me one day. I know if I live right and live as I should live; He will bless my life and He will use me. That is hope. I know that. I know what He said He will do—He will do, if I do what I need to do. That is what hope is all about. The Bible says here...it is a security. It is assuredly. It is something that we absolutely know.

I have heard people say... “Well I'm not really sure whether I am saved or not.” Listen folks. If you really are saved, then you are going to know, you are going to have a hope, or you are going to have assuredly that you are going to know that you are saved. Do I always feel like I am saved? No. Do I always act like I am saved? No. You don't either. Amen!

We have a hope. Hope is surety. Hope here is something we can have. Hope is something that is real. Hope is perfect assurance. It is confidence. We know and how we know and we believe that there is a Holy God. How we know these things, how that we have the hope that we have today; is because there is a presence, there is a spirit that dwells within us. Saved people have the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Do you know what gives me hope today? I know He is on the inside.

Some days, when it all seems like it is falling apart and things are just not going right in life; you can get alone with Him and call out to Him and do you know what He will do? His spirit will bear witness with my spirit and He will let me know that I am alive and that I am not dead anymore. Do you know what He will do? He will energize the hope that we have and that we do have and He will churn up the confidence that we have. Do you know what He will do? He will say...it's time to go. Let's go. We don't have time for you to be sitting around feeling sorry for yourself. We have things to do. People are dying. That is what the Holy Ghost. He will encourage you. That is because we have hope.

We have been justified. We have been declared righteous. Righteousness has been put on our account. We have peace. We have access. We have hope. We have a surety. We have confidence that I am saved. I know I am saved. I know where I am going. I know that God saved me. I know where I am at is where I need to be at. Amen! I know what I am doing is what I need to be doing. Amen! That is confidence. Not in me but that is confidence in God. We can know that because of the Holy Ghost dwelling in here. I promise you there is a whole lot more to this.

Not only do we have access, not only do we have peace, not only do we have hope be he says here...

Romans 5:3 And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

In other words, not only do we have all that other stuff but we have this. He says here, "...we glory in tribulations..." glory, not glorying through tribulation, but he says here, "...glory in tribulations..." The issues and the problems in life, when they do come, we are going to glory in them. We are going to be thankful for them. Do you know what we are going to know? Listen. We are going to know...if we have been saved, we have peace, we have access, we have hope, trouble when they come; do you know what we are going to do? We are going to glory in the troubles when they come because we know that when these troubles come, we are in God's hand. He is allowing things to come our way. He is allowing this to do some things in our life. Do you know what we are going to do? We are going to glory in those things. We are going to know that He is working something out in our life.

Do you know what I have? I have a lot of working out that needs to be worked out, and you do too. Do you know what God will do? God will work out some things in our life if we will allow Him to do that. When we are justified, when we have been saved, we have been born again; these trials—listen—when I am saved, and you are saved, you are born again, and you have been declared righteous; do you know what is not going to happen?

Get this. The trials and the troubles in life, it matters not how great they are and sometimes they are great, sometimes they are overwhelming. However, do you know what they are not going to do? If you have been declared righteous they are not going to defeat you. Amen! Do you know why? Because we have somebody on the inside. We have the indwelling of the Holy Ghost and when I follow Him and listen to Him; do you know what He will do? He will help you through. I am not going to tell you that you are not going to cry yourself to sleep.

There have been times in my Christian life that I have cried myself to sleep. Amen! Maybe you have never done that, but I have. There have been times in my life that I did not know where I was going to get the next dollar from to feed the kids. There have been times like that. How I was going to do whatever. There have been all kinds of times in my life that I did not know what to do or where to go. Do you know what I did not let it do? It did not defeat me because I knew I had been declared righteous. I knew I had peace with God. I knew I had access to the throne room of God. I knew that I had a hope that did not come from this world. Because of all of that, because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God; I was not defeated. Amen!

Listen. Do you know what gets us defeated? It is when we lose hope and when we think there is no hope. We get to thinking that Jesus doesn't love us and nobody cares about us. We get ourselves in a mess.

Listen folks. We have hope tonight. Do you know what tribulation will do? tribulation will produce something in your life that you need. Get this. I never thought about this until today. Tribulation plus trials and troubles plus Jesus Christ will bring patience in your life. Problems, tribulations, troubles plus Jesus Christ will bring patience in your life. I think one of the greatest virtues that we need as Christian people is patience. Simply waiting upon God. Simply waiting and listening and to make sure that we are following the right voice. Patience means endurance. Patience means fortitude. Patience means steadfastness. Patience means consistency. Patience means perseverance.

Listen. Problems plus Jesus it will produce consistency in my life. I won't be up and down. Get that! I won't be up today and down tomorrow. I won't be praising God today and praising the devil tomorrow. Amen! I won't be on cloud nine today and lower than Jonah's whale tomorrow. There will be some consistency in our lives. It will produce consistency.

Not only that but also, patience plus Jesus Christ will produce some experience in your life.

Do you know what experience is? It means to expect with confidence. Experience here has to do with character. It has to do with integrity. It has to do with strength. It has to do with strength. Experience has to do with things that have been proven in life.

Patience here plus Jesus Christ will produce a Christian character in my life. It will produce a character that is right. It will produce integrity in my life. Amen! If we are going to have any influence on this world, the number one thing we have to have as Christian people is integrity. If we don't have integrity then people won't believe one thing we say. Amen! Not only that but when we have patience plus Jesus, it will bring patience.

When we have patience plus Jesus, it produces hope. Hope here is confidence. It is anticipating, knowing and anticipating things are going to happen. It means to be looking forward, and looking long for something. It means to make sure that we are looking long for something. It means to desire with assurance.

I know where I am going. I know what God is doing. I understand what is happening here. I know what God is trying to work out in my...

Anticipation—do you know what we should be doing? We should be anticipating God is going to do something great with you. You should be. You should be living in a way that when you wake up in the morning; you should be anticipating what God is going to do with you today. How He is going to bless you today. He wants to do that. That is one of the favors that God has His hand upon you. He wants to do some great things. However, when we wake up in the morning; let's anticipate. Let's think.

Lord, what do you have for me today. I mean this. I was downtown yesterday and told somebody this and I know they thought I was crazy. I know they did the way they

looked at me. However, every morning when I get up—or most every morning—do you know what I do? Lord, help me to put on my spiritual shoes and make sure they are shined. Help me Lord, to put on my spiritual clothes and make sure they are ironed and pressed. Make sure, Lord, that I lent rolled them very well, to make sure they don't have any cat hair all over them. Amen! I won't be—when I go out; I will look as I should look. Lord, help me that I brush my spiritual teeth, wash my spiritual face, comb my spiritual hair. Lord, eat from your Word, and be nourished from your Word; Lord this day. Lord, I'm standing here in anticipation. Lord, I'm ready. I have done all of this. My uniform is on. It is ready. I have spent some time with you. I have spent some time in your Word. Lord, what have you got for me to do today.

Let me tell you something. If you will honestly and sincerely mean that; God will have a job for you tomorrow. God will have something for you to do tomorrow that you never dreamed that you could do. He will help you to talk to people that you never thought you would have the opportunity to talk to. Amen! It takes effort. It takes time. It takes time to search this guy. It takes time to get all the wrinkles and the gom and all the stuff that clings to you every now and then; it takes time to get rid of it. It takes time to eat from His Word. It takes time to clean this guy up. When we get this guy cleaned up, and stand ready—Lord, I'm ready. Lord, I'm going to cut the grass, but if you have something other than me cutting grass then hallelujah. Amen! Lord, I've got this but if you have something more for me to do...

I could tell you stories guys. I told this guy a few yesterday. I know that he probably—I don't know what he thought for sure. I don't know. But with his reaction. In life there have been many days and many times that I have done that and God has taken me places and put me with people that the next day would have been too late. God put me in places on this particular day that when the next day would have been too late because they were dead. That has happened many times in life.

Listen. God wants to build character in our lives. Experience—do you know what it does? Plus, character, plus character, plus Jesus Christ brings hope. Hope doesn't make you ashamed. As a Christian, I don't have one thing to be ashamed of. I could stand any place, if I was on the white house lawn tonight; I would not be ashamed to stand up and tell the world, I love Jesus Christ. Do you know why? Because I have been declared righteous. Amen! I have been declared right with Him. I have access to heaven. I have peace. I have hope. Amen! It doesn't make you ashamed. Hope doesn't make you ashamed at all.

Listen. Hope will never disappoint you. The hope that you have, the anticipation that you have when we are living as we should be living, following the promises of God, as we should be...do you know what it will do? It won't make you ashamed. Hope will never disappoint you. Listen. Things may not happen in the time we want them to happen, but the hope we have in Jesus Christ, one day, is going to come. One day He is going to come and He is going to take me home and He is going to take you home. Amen! That is exciting to know.

There are many other things here we could talk about this evening. However, this is what I want you to get. If you have been declared righteous, if you have put faith in Jesus Christ; you have been declared righteous by Almighty God. That is a positive. Since that has taken place, you have access to all of heaven, to all the blessings that God has got for you and for me. I promise you something...

It is like on Christmas day, up to the house, especially; you get all the kids and grandkids up there. You have the tree and all these packages laying around. Deb usually gives out the packages. I never did get into that. I just get out of the way and she just passes them out. The kids are up there and the grandkids are up there and do you know what they do? You give them this big box, and they rip it open real quick and they see what is in it; do you know what they want to do then? They want to know what the next one is.

As Christian people, we should be the same way. We should rip the paper off of all the blessings that God has for us. We should use them. We should see what they are. They should bring joy to our hearts. We should use them for the glory of Almighty God. He has all kinds of them. They sit around sometimes and we never rip the paper off of them.

I said this somewhere. I was a Lowes a month ago. I walked down the aisle. I saw this big saw. Some kind of a miter saw. I thought man, I would love to have one of them. You could cut all this stuff. You could cut all these angles... True story. I come back home and I'm out in the garage looking around, beating around out there. Do you know what I look up on the shelf and I see? I see the exact same saw in a box that had never been opened upon the shelf. Did you ever do that? The kids had bought some time or another. I never did buy it. It was there. There had been all kinds of times that I could have used that on some of these little jobs that we do. I would take one of these little six-dollar miter boxes and try to hold it and you know. I had that saw up there all the time that had never been opened.

The same thing is true in our Christian lives sometimes. The boxes are sitting on the shelf. They are there. They are there for us to use.

Just like the saw was there for me to use. It belonged to me. Somebody gave it to me. It was there. I don't know how long it had been there. I don't know how many years it had set there. I don't know how many times I could have used that in the last few years but I didn't know I had it. I never took time to really research and see what I had.

I think sometimes in our Christian life we don't take inventory of really what we have. All the things that God has got for us that we could be using—get this—that would make life so much easier if we would just open the box. Amen!

See that scar right there? If I would have had that saw and using it that day, I wouldn't have a big scar right there. Amen! I may have cut my finger off, but I wouldn't have had that scar.

In life sometimes, we get a lot of scars simply because we don't open the box. I was trying to hold with this hand and saw with this with the saw. If I would have had that thing, I would have zipped through it and went on. There are so many things that God wants to bless us with, and God has given us to use that makes life so much easier and so much better. However, we never get it out of the box. It stays in the box.

Listen. Let's change that tonight. What do you say? Let's leave here tonight with an attitude, "Lord, when I go home tonight, before I go to bed; I'm going to take inventory of my life and see where I am at and see what I have got and see Lord, what you have got for me. I want to see the things that I have not used, Lord, the things that you have given me that I have not used that would make life so much better and so much easier, and so much more comfortable and better for those we come in contact with that are lost." Lets' do that.

When we wake up in the morning, listen; this isn't going to kill you...in the morning, if you usually get up at 7:00, get up 15 minutes earlier. Spend some time with God. If you don't pray before you go to work, do some praying tomorrow before you go to work. Before you step out in the morning and step out into the world, where all the hustle and bustle and the racket are going on; spend some time alone with God. Examine who you are. Get all the spots and wrinkles. Ask God for forgiveness. Ask God for cleansing. Ask God to use you. He will do that.

Come and pray—